SR 101 Corridor Improvement Feasibility Study

draft preliminary alternatives report

prepared for

Indiana Department of Transportation

prepared by

Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

with

Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates, Inc.
Dyer Environmental Services

October 2001

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Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
150 CambridgePark Drive, Suite 4000
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140

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1.0 Introduction

The SR 101 Corridor Improvement Feasibility Study has been undertaken by the Indiana Department of Transportation to assess the implications of limited north-south access in the SR 101 study area and to identify feasible improvement alternatives. Based on an assessment of purpose and need, discussed in the draft Statement of Purpose and Need (September 2001), study goals include the following:

- Improve roadway safety and reduce accident frequency in the study area; and

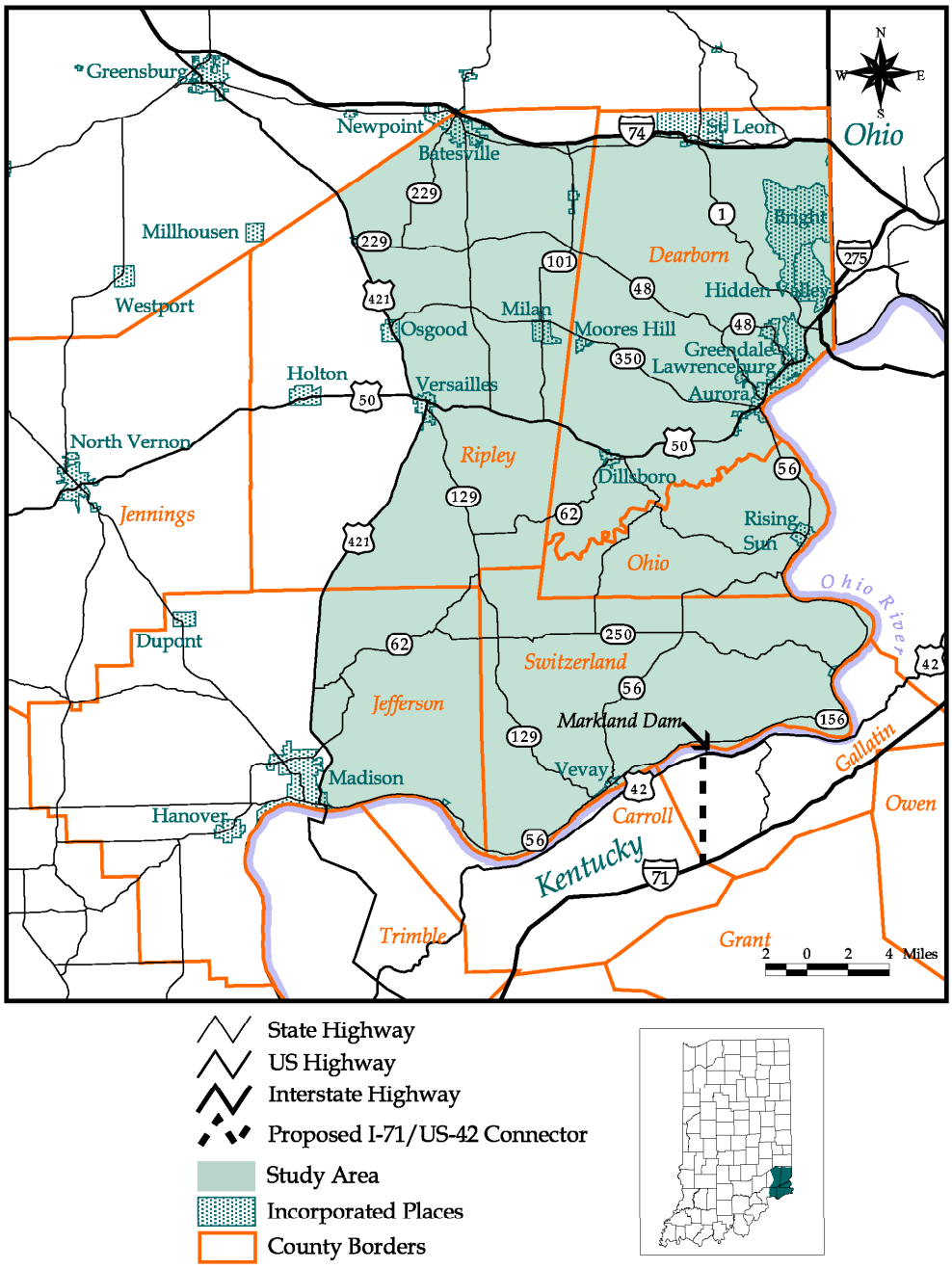
- Address perceptions of inadequate regional accessibility and connectivity, and if perceptions prove valid, improve regional accessibility and connectivity.

The existing Indiana State Route 101 (SR 101) is a rural two-lane roadway that runs north-south in disconnected segments along the eastern border of Indiana, from Dekalb County in northern Indiana to Switzerland County in the south, approximately the entire length of the state. Because of its lack of continuity, its ability to effectively serve north-south vehicular movement in southeastern Indiana is limited. Figure 1.1 shows the SR 101 corridor study area and its major roadways.

The feasibility study is being prepared by Cambridge Systematics, Inc. with Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates and Dyer Environmental Services under the supervision of a Management Committee comprised INDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Public officials, agency representatives, and the public at-large are represented through the Study Advisory Committee. Public meetings are also being conducted to obtain input from the general public. The project is being administered consistent with the guidelines of Indiana's Streamlined EIS Procedures.

Based on an assessment of the study area's transportation needs and input obtained from INDOT and the Study Advisory Committee and through interviews with community officials and business representatives, a preliminary set of alternatives have been developed for public review. These preliminary alternatives are described in the following section.

Figure 1.1 SR 101 Study Area



2.0 Identification of Preliminary Alternatives

In order to initiate discussion of feasible alternatives to address transportation needs in the SR 101 Corridor, a set of preliminary alternatives have been developed to illustrate a range of options which potentially warrant further consideration. These alternatives were developed as a result of consultation with INDOT, the Study Advisory Committee, interviews with public official and business leaders, and analysis of traffic data. The following alternatives are being initially considered:

- Alternative 1: A roadway between Markland Dam (east of Vevay on SR 156) and SR 129 at U.S. 50 (east of Versailles) with possible upgrade of SR 129 to I-74;

- Alternative 2: A roadway between Markland Dam (east of Vevay on SR 156) and SR 101 at U.S. 50 (east of Versailles) with possible upgrade of SR 101 to I-74;

- Alternative 3: A roadway between Markland Dam (east of Vevay on SR 156) to U.S. 50 east of Dillsboro with possible extension to I-74;

- Alternative 4: Transportation systems management (TSM) enhancements on SR 129 between SR 250 and SR 56; on SR 56 between Vevay and SR 250; and, on SR 156 between Vevay and Rising Son; and

- Alternative 5: Do nothing.

The following discussion describes these alternatives in more detail. It should be noted that the three "build" alternatives discussed below (Alternatives 1, 2, and 3) are not inconsistent with the corridor currently being studied by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet through the Northern Kentucky Outer Loop (I-74) Conceptual Feasibility Study. This corridor across northern Kentucky was designated by the U.S. Congress in 1998 as a "high-priority corridor."

Alternative 1

This alternative would involve the construction of a roadway between Markland Dam at SR 156, east of Vevay, and SR 129 at U.S. 50, approximately 3.5 miles east of Versailles. The roadway would run a distance of approximately 23.9 miles. The roadway would run concurrent with a portion of Bear Branch Road, north of SR 250 at Fairview, approximately two miles. From U.S. 50, SR 129 connects to SR 46 in Batesville, in proximity to the Batesville interchange on I-74 (Exit 149). As an option, this alternative could include upgrading of SR 129 north of U.S. 50 to I-74.

The corridor for this alternative is shown in Figure 2.1. A potential constraint within this corridor involves the crossing of Laughery Creek and its tributaries.

Alternative 2

This alternative would involve the construction of a roadway between Markland Dam at SR 156, east of Vevay, and SR 101 at U.S. 50, approximately 10 miles east of Versailles. The roadway would run a length of approximately 22.0 miles. The roadway would run concurrent with a portion of Bear Branch Road, north of SR 250 at Fairview, approximately two miles. From U.S. 50, SR 101 runs through Milan and Sunman, connecting to SR 46 east of Batesville and an interchange on I-74 (Exit 156) between Batesville and St. Leon. As an option, this alternative could include upgrading of SR 101 north of U.S. 50 to I-74.

The corridor for this alternative is shown in Figure 2.2. A potential constraint within this corridor involves the crossing of Laughery Creek.

Alternative 3

This alternative would involve the construction of a roadway between Markland Dam at SR 156, east of Vevay, and U.S. 50, between Dillsboro and Aurora, a length of approximately 17.5 miles. The roadway would run concurrent with a portion of SR 56, north of SR 250 between East Enterprise and Aberdeen, approximately two miles. As an option, this alternative could include a continuation of the roadway north of U.S. 50 to provide a continuous connection to I-74 in the vicinity of St. Leon.

The corridor for this alternative is shown in Figure 2.3. A potential constraint within this corridor involves the crossing of Laughery Creek.

Figure 2.1 Alternative 1 – Roadway to SR 129/U.S. 50

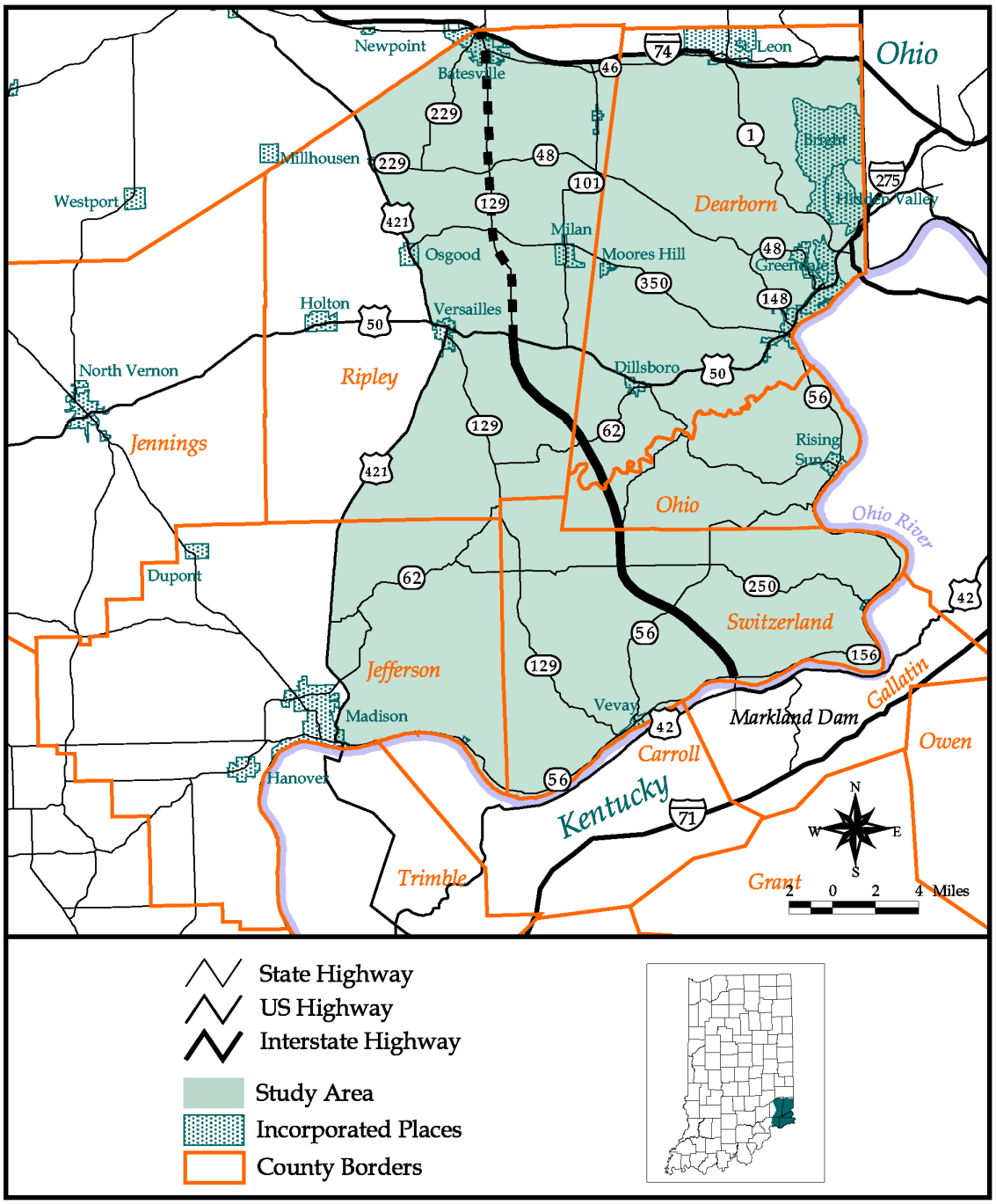


Figure 2.2 Alternative 2 – Roadway to SR 101/U.S. 50

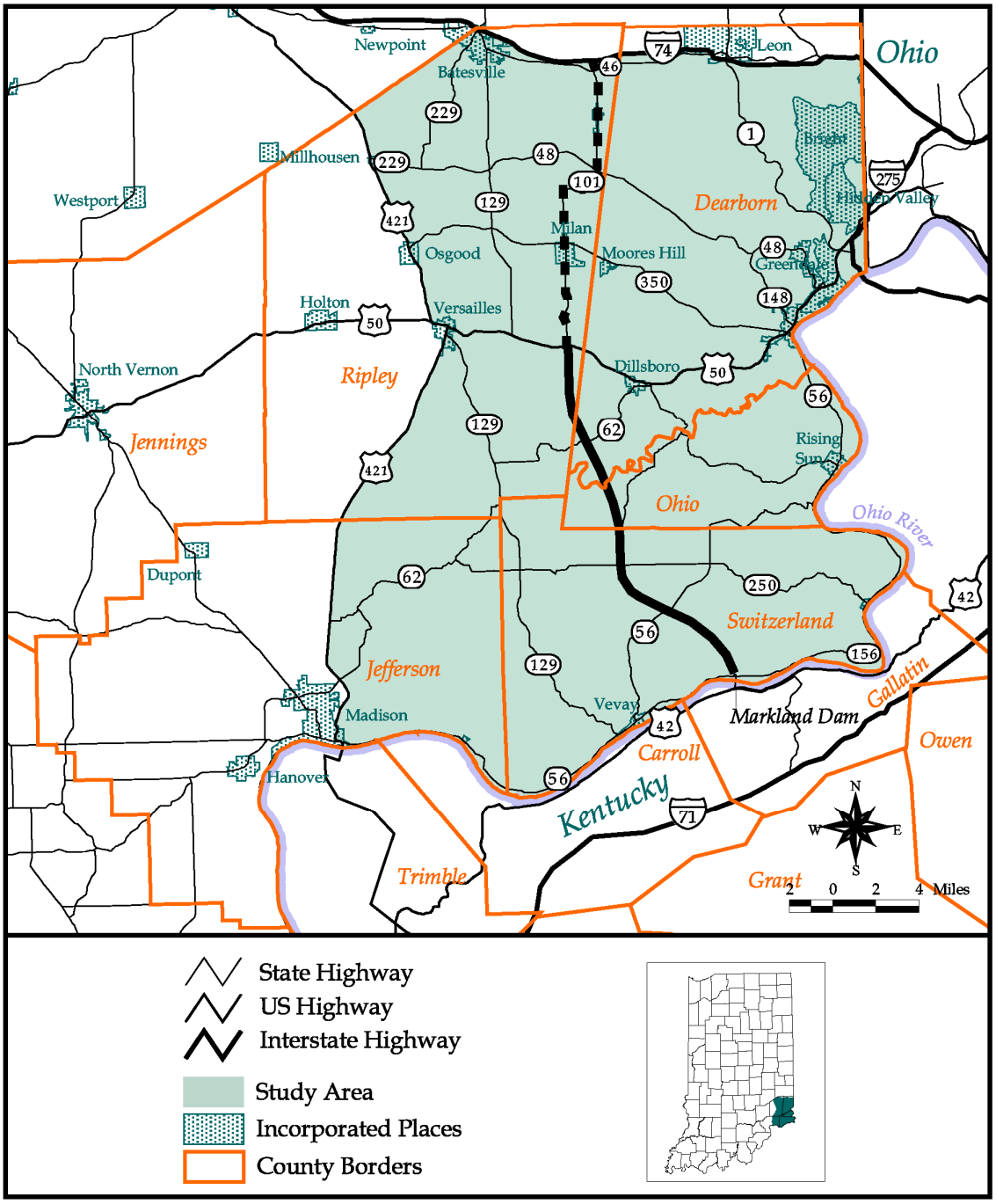
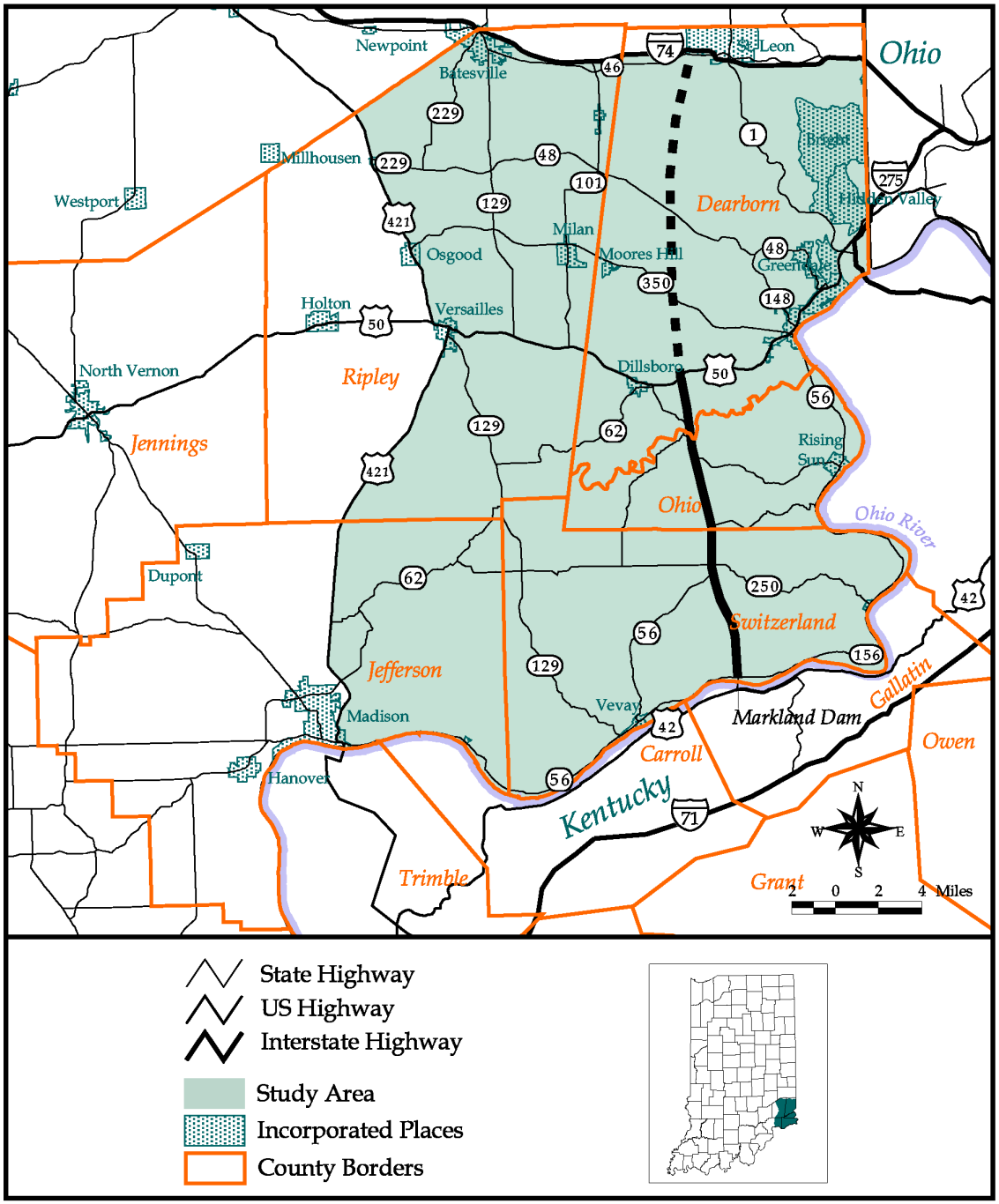


Figure 2.3 Alternative 3 – Roadway to U.S. 50 (via SR 56)



Alternative 4

This alternative will involve a range of transportation systems management (TSM) enhancements to existing roadways with the objective of eliminating potential hazards and improving roadway safety. These enhancements could include a variety of improvements such as pavement and shoulder widenings and reductions in steep grades and tight curves. Based on a review of accident statistics and traffic volumes, roadways initially identified for TSM improvements include: a) SR 129 between SR 250 and SR 56 in Vevay; b) SR 56 in Switzerland County; and, c) SR 156 between Vevay and Rising Sun.

The roadways initially identified for TSM improvements are shown in Figure 2.4.

Alternative 5

This alternative would involve no changes to the existing highway network in the study area. This alternative will provide a baseline for comparison to the other alternatives.

Figure 2.4 Alternative 4 – Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Enhancements